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Misalliance: a stage manager's process

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MISALLIANCE: A STAGE MANAGER'S PROCESS

by

Rebecca Joan Simons

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Arts
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2011

Thesis Supervisors: Lecturer James P. Birder
Associate Professor Bryon Winn

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Rebecca Joan Simons

has been approved by the Examining Committee
for the thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts
degree Theatre Arts at the May 2011 graduation.

Thesis Committee: _____
James P. Birder, Thesis Supervisor

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David McGraw

To my family, for their constant support and encouragement, especially my grandmother, who taught me to never give up on my dreams because anything is possible, and without whom I would never have made it here today.

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PRIOR TO THE FIRST PRODUCTION MEETING

Strengths and Challenges of the Script

This production started the moment I was handed the script, and did not end until the ghost light had been placed on the stage following the final performance. What I have attempted to do in this thesis is to give an insight into the process of the stage manager from the start of the production to its conclusion. I wanted to document the concerns that lead to anticipation of potential challenges and the steps undertaken to mitigate them. This is an account of my foray into the world of Bernard Shaw's *Misalliance*.

The first thing that struck me about this play was the grandeur and elegance of the language. I was curious how the director would choose to stage the production, as much of it revolves around a fascination with the act of discussion and harkens back to a much simpler period in history. While having moments of gravity, this play is ultimately a comedy. One of the first challenges the actors faced was how to connect to the occasionally weighty text yet keep the show fun and inspired.

The script featured a number of references to authors, ideas and monetary values that added great value to the production. There was concern that some of the references might seem obscure to a modern audience and the monetary values, both British and in 1909 amounts, would have little meaning. The director decided to use a combination of projected images and text to act as live footnotes throughout the course of the production. While the exact specifics of how these would be utilized were not known, the eventual goal was to allow the audience to appreciate the show without getting lost in translation.

In the original script, the action took place in a country house in the village of Hindhead in the county of Surrey in England in 1909. The production team decided to change the year

to 1920. This meant that the architectural style became lighter and less formal, and the clothing style was less restrictive and allowed for greater movement.

The director decided to make some changes to the script to help in adapting it for the modern audience. Line cuts were made to condense the running time of the show and increase the clarity of the narrative and, as a result, the majority of lines cut were those that seemed superfluous to the action of the play. One of the first conversations that I had with the director was regarding the most expedient way to communicate these changes to the cast, and it was decided to print new copies of the script for all the actors.

As part of his initial concept, the director wanted to use British dialects. In my mind, this indicated that some rehearsal time with the actors might be utilized to facilitate private vocal coaching sessions.

Biggest Challenges Facing This Production

One of the biggest challenges I perceived with this production was the use of projections, and how they would work in conjunction with other aspects of the show. Specifically, I was uncertain as to how projection cues would time out with light and sound cues. I did not anticipate a large number of either light or sound cues, but knew that those in the show would be very specific. From past experience I knew that working with projections would add time to the tech process, as they often require additional steps to deal with either computer content or the physical projection equipment.

In the script, there was a scene that called for a bowl to break onstage. Broken glass onstage with actors is always a concern, so we needed to find a way to make the moment dramatic, like the director wanted, yet also safe.

The script also called for a plane crash to occur, and this is the point where the director chose to place an intermission. The director envisioned having all the characters onstage

panic upon seeing the plane, then hear the plane crash as the lights went out for intermission. The second act would pick up the action thirty seconds after the crash. Early in the design process the director decided to have the crash occur offstage.

Another production concern that I had was with some of the action required by the play. In a heated moment, one actor is supposed to slap another, and there is also a scuffle that breaks out among three characters, one of whom is holding a gun. Due to concern for actor safety with these fight sequences, the faculty fight choreographer was asked to direct these moments to reduce the chance of injury. This indicated to me a need to call actors involved in these portions of the show early each evening to allow a fight call to happen onstage prior to house open. In turn, this would mean ensuring the crew completed their work onstage in a timely manner to keep the actors on schedule.

Unique Requirements and Challenges of this Production

One of the biggest challenges that I personally faced was staying actively engaged with the script throughout the rehearsal process. Shaw is a verbose author, and I found that this tended to let me to lose focus during rehearsals. The director told me that he intended to spend more time on table work with this production than he usually spends. In my experience, directors tend to spend an average of two or three days on table work, and with this production, the director would like to spend at least a week dissecting the script and talking through it.

I anticipated challenges for my production team, as some members were responsible for multiple areas of the production. My concern was that as time progressed, overwork and subsequent exhaustion would adversely affect the team and strain interpersonal relationships. The projection designer was acting as the assistant scenic designer, the assistant projection designer was also the assistant lighting designer, and the dramaturg was helping generate the

projection content. The electrics crew was responding to both electrics and projection notes, and I was concerned this would create a time crunch further on in the process.

Personal Leadership and Management Goals

One of my major goals with this production was how I am perceived as a stage manager by both the production team and the actors. In the past, I had received feedback that I could bring more warmth to my role, and I wanted to work on that perception. I wanted to continue to work on my professionalism when interacting with the production team, as well as stepping up and becoming a better leader, both in weekly production meetings and in tech.

In relation to the actors, I wanted to take that extra couple of minutes to check in with them at the top of rehearsal and see what was going on in their lives. In the past I have discovered that a friendly hello can go a long way, as we all like knowing that someone cares what happens to us. With the production team, I hoped to become a better communicator and collaborator by gaining a greater understanding of the design process. I eventually hoped that this would lead to me becoming a better leader.

Defining the Roles and Expectations of the Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Manager

The role of the stage manager is to act as a communication hub for the production. She is responsible for running production meetings, making sure that the team as a whole is on the same page, and that information is distributed to whoever might need it. The stage manager needs to be aware of all the decisions made by the production team in order to inform actors of these changes and also needs to communicate changes made in rehearsal to the production team.

In my mind, the assistant stage manager is responsible for many of the more tangible portions of the production. She is the one in charge of tracking properties and developing the paperwork to assist the crew in their work backstage, as well as overseeing the crew backstage during the production. Whereas I feel that I am accountable for the production as a whole once the show opens, the main role of the assistant stage manager is to step up and be in charge of the backstage elements of the show.

I felt that this production would be a learning experience for me because I have worked with less experienced assistants. The assistant stage manager on this project is a first-year graduate student in the stage management program, and has worked as a stage manager in her own right in the past. I thought both of us would need to adapt our personal styles to work cooperatively with each other, and would need to work to develop a common vocabulary in order to avoid misunderstanding.

AFTER TWO WEEKS OF REHEARSAL

Addressing Early Challenges

The original script changes were made to edit the script for running time. Additional changes beyond those the director originally envisioned have been made to further clarify the narrative of the story. Most of the rehearsal time had been spent doing table work with the cast and allowing them opportunities to move around freely without blocking in order to start getting a feel for the show.

In working with the actors and the text, the director made a decision to drop the British dialect, as he felt that the script was strong enough without it. As a result, references to the English locations in the script, such as "Hindhead" and "Surrey," were cut to allow the

location to remain a little more ambiguous. The production team moved forward the date of the production by another year. The show now takes place in 1921.

In the script there are a number of monetary references made that are in pounds, pence and shillings. These remained in the show and the footnote projections were used to give a modern day equivalency in American dollars to help the audience understand the reference.

In regard to the bowl that needed to break onstage, a way was found to take care of the effect safely. Talks with the scenic designer and the property master yielded a solution: the bowl would be thrown into a crate constructed specifically for the effect. This would allow the dramatic moment to occur onstage, yet prevent accident or injury. It was also decided that the bowl would be made of ceramic rather than glass, as supported by the script, when Mrs. Tarleton refers to the broken vessel as "that crock." I anticipated that this was a moment that would need to be worked in technical rehearsals. The crate blended in with the existing scenic design, as the convention was that the Turkish Bath was new and just out of the crate. To further support this, there was a box of leftover tools that started onstage at the top of the show.

Addressing New Challenges

Part of the scenic design included a round oculus upon which projections of the sky with moving clouds would be seen, much as one would imagine seeing when looking out the window of a glass domed building. It had been my assumption that the projection image would run on the screen throughout the entire show without changing. I found out that this was not to be the case, which indicated that the projections were going to be more involved in the production than I had originally anticipated.

The director wanted to have a visual effect for the plane crash appear on the oculus at the end of act one, which needed to be a separately cued sequence. I was not precisely sure

what this projection would look like or how the cueing would work, but realized that it would require a significant portion of the technical rehearsal in order to determine the placement of the projection cue and subsequent sound and light cues.

Along with the oculus projection, more footnote projections had been added during the rehearsal process. In addition to providing the modern day dollar equivalencies for the audience, there would also be projections explaining the authors and their works that Mr. Tarleton's character is notorious for referencing. The director was worried that without the clarification, the audience would miss out on the humor of the play by failing to understand Mr. Tarleton's references to less well known books and authors.

Modifying the Stage Management Style to Meet the Needs of the Production

In working with the director, I found his style to be very calm, and I have tried to replicate that tone with my style of stage management. This was a challenge for me, as I tend to be less relaxed, and have a habit of psyching myself out over small details, that while important, are not the main focal point. To this effect, I had been working on shifting my priorities from one area of the production to another as determined by daily developments and needs.

I was working with a very experienced design team and was trying to be as accommodating as possible in responding to all requests for information. The footnote projections required time to create and were impacted by nightly changes in rehearsal. In order to decrease the time needed to distribute this information I used the online callboard in order to allow multiple users to view and edit it. This was particularly helpful as the dramaturg was able to write the text and find images while the projection designer was able to simultaneously upload it into a software program.

Modifying the Roles and Expectations of the Assistant Stage Manager

The majority of the roles and expectations of the assistant stage manager remained the same, although we were still finessing the way we worked as a team. The assistant stage manager had a number of ideas and insightful input into the process, and at this point in rehearsals, we had devised a system for setting up and cleaning up the rehearsal space on a nightly basis. One of the challenges of this production was that it had a large number of rehearsal costumes and furniture pieces, all of which needed to be transported to the rehearsal hall at the top of the night, and put away afterward.

An added challenge for this production was that both the assistant stage manager and I were going to be out of town on a pre-arranged absence the weekend prior to tech. As much as possible, we both worked to keep the production as organized as possible to avoid any surprises for the replacement stage manager.

AFTER THE PRODUCTION CLOSES

How the Production Differed from Expectations

This show tested my skills as a stage manager and presented an interesting series of challenges that forced me to think on my feet. I made the mistake of underestimating the scope of this production, as I approached it with the expectation that it would be a simple play with some additional technical elements. I assumed this because the action of the play was straightforward, taking place over the course of a single day, and had no costume changes. This lulled me into a false sense of security, which is something I have learned not to let happen in the future.

The number of footnote projections increased, and the director decided to add the sound of a bell ringing every time one of these projections appeared. This was an exciting

challenge in that it required marrying the calls on a lot of the sound and projection cues, and working with the board operators to finesse the execution of the cues.

Another added element was a live foley effect produced backstage by the deck crew to simulate the sound of the plane crash at the end of act one. Initially, the director wanted this to be a recorded cue. Later in the design process, he felt that a live sound cue supported by a recorded one would provide a much more dramatic effect. Although this effect was accomplished, it was very challenging to perfect the precise timing of the cueing sequence for this moment.

The pre-show and intermission cueing sequences were complicated by the use of four separate projectors. In pre-tech discussions with the projection designer, it was thought that only the projection operator would need to have anything to do with the projection system. In tech it became apparent that additional crew members would be needed in order to operate shutters to put the screens into a full blackout. I wish I had discussed this more thoroughly with the projection designer in order to better distribute backstage personnel prior to tech.

As part of pre-show, the director wanted a specific piece of music to be played immediately preceding the start of the action. There were also projection slides asking audience members to turn off their cell phones, and these cycled on a pre-determined loop set up by the designer. The director wanted to hear the sound cue of the bell for the last three or four slides immediately before the show to prepare the audience for the footnote slides. All of these requests had to be accommodated while staying in communication with the house manager and assistant stage manager, as that could change the calling for all of these elements. I had never called anything with this precision before, and I felt that it was an excellent learning experience.

The final element that differed from my expectations was the lighting. I had anticipated having only a small number of light cues, and the lighting designer ended up responding to the precise movements that the actors made throughout the show. In performances, I needed to pay very close attention to the action to call the cues correctly.

The Most Challenging Components of the Production

For me, the most challenging component of this production were the cueing sequences. While the majority of the cues were not overly complicated, it was the sheer number and the strict attention needed to correctly execute them that I found daunting. In the entire two and a half hour show, there was only about a page and half of dialogue in which I was not calling light cues, sound cues, projection cues or some combination of the three. In many places, I found myself needing to give standbys for multiple cues, because I did not have the time in between calls to give a number or letter, but merely had to say GO to the operator again. This was a new challenge for both myself and the board operators, as we had to learn to communicate with one another in a short period of time. A lot of attention was given to practicing sequences in order to perfect the calling.

The most challenging cue sequences were those going into the top of each act, intermission and post-show. These sequences required a precision in cueing that I had not previously encountered. Specific elements needed to be called separately, yet overlap with the previous call in order to achieve the look that the designers wanted. It took a lot of discussion with various designers and some trial and error during tech in order for me to learn to call these sequences correctly.

The projections were the other most challenging component of the production. Throughout tech and performances, we experienced a multitude of issues which ranged

from remote controls not working to a projector bulb dying in the middle of a show. These problems caused frustration, but had to be dealt with in stride.

One of my early concerns in this process was the production personnel assigned to multiple areas of the show. There were some time conflicts between lights and projections, as the same team was responsible for taking care of notes for these areas. If at all possible, when I work with projections in the future, I would request a separate crew or individual to take care of these notes.

Once the show opened, I was responsible for acting as quality control for the production, and I had to adjust my calling in order to maintain the aesthetics of the production. During one performance, a lamp in one of the projectors died during the production, and I made the decision to not call those cues for the remaining ten pages of the show. I never had to make a decision like that during a performance before. There was no way to immediately fix the problem, and the audience would have been aware of the technical glitch if only half the text for the projection appeared. The success I found in this situation was the ability to make a quick decision and provide leadership for the team.

Analysis of Leadership Skills

I feel that I built a good rapport with the actors from the start of the process. I was able to listen to them and respond to their needs. Getting to know everyone in the production as an individual helped make me a better leader and allowed the actors to trust me.

I think I fell short in leading the production team. There were times I felt I did a good job communicating with individuals and sharing information, but there were other times when I felt I was inadequate. One of these times was during tech when I felt I was not getting information I was asking for from members of the team, and I let my frustration show. The moment I allowed that frustration to show in my voice and actions, I felt that I

lost some of the rapport that I had built with the team. In the future, I plan to work harder on keeping calm at all times and not letting my annoyance show.

Analysis of Learning from this Production Experience

The biggest thing I gained from this experience was confidence. This show had a number of technical challenges that arose and forced me to step up and become a leader. I had to make decisions on-the-fly and solve problems as they arose without being able to discuss possible solutions with anyone. This had been difficult for me in the past, as I had a tendency to second guess myself and wonder if I had really chosen the best course of action after all. This production was unforgiving. I had to make decisions and stick with them, even though they may not have been correct.

I have learned that you need to stay upbeat when everything goes wrong. The production crew for this project was enthusiastic, but being human, occasionally made mistakes. In those situations, I stepped away from the issue and considered it critically and questioned what I might have done to help the crew member do a better job. In some cases it was a matter of re-explaining something. In others, it was allowing time to comprehend the error and then giving encouragement to do better the next time. I found that I got positive results from the crew by letting them know I had confidence in their ability to improve.

Analysis of the Relationship Between Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Manager

I feel that I fell short as a mentor to the assistant stage manager, and as a result, our relationship had mixed success. If I had to go back and start over again, I think we could have found better ways to communicate and collaborate together.

As a stage manager, I am used to having inexperienced assistant stage managers who need a one-on-one mentor. With this production, the assistant stage manager was more experienced and wanted the freedom to work more independently, and I was not prepared for that. If working with an individual like this in the future, I would like to improve on my ability to delegate work in order to avoid micro-managing. The assistant stage manager would have benefitted more from knowing she had my trust and the freedom to experiment within her position, and this is a goal I will be working towards in the future.

In spite of our differences, we were able to pull together as a team and put on a unified front for the cast and crew. I wish there had been more time to allow the assistant stage manager to incorporate more of her input into the process. She had some really great thoughts and suggestions for backstage, and unfortunately there was not time to integrate all of these. I hope that in the future I can find a way to make this time available.

Adaptation to the Various Styles and Personalities of the Collaborators

As a stage manager, I was willing to continually reevaluate what I was doing and how I was doing it in order to help create the best product possible. A good example of this was during the tech process, when time was spent re-working segments of the show as late as the night before opening. I wanted to be as accommodating as possible to all requests by designers in order to allow them the time to achieve a look or a moment with which they were satisfied.

The most important area where I needed to be patient and ready to adapt to changes was projections. On the first day of technical rehearsal, elements of the projection rig had yet to be installed, and I realized that additional time would be needed later to work through these elements. Projection problems arose, and while it might have been easier to create deadlines and then cut elements if they were not met, I felt that doing this would be imposing a time

limit on the projection designer that was not fair. While the content was under his control, the physical equipment was not his responsibility, and sometimes the electricians department did not have enough time or personnel to take care of the notes. In hindsight, a deadline might have been a better approach, but this would have needed to be agreed upon prior to tech.

As a result of this process, I have learned that it is better to thoroughly question members of the production team early in the process. When the director first mentioned a live foley sound cue, it came as a surprise to both myself and the sound designer. More discussion about this moment in the play earlier in the process would have clarified this and allowed more planning time. With projections, I should have discussed the use of shutters with the designer prior to tech, which would have reduced the instances of misunderstanding that occurred. Although every production team is different, I have a better idea of what questions I should be asking throughout the process.

Overall Learning Outcome from Graduate Studies

I feel that I have gained the skills necessary to deal with almost any production challenge, and with this particular production I had the opportunity to utilize those skills. I crossed my fingers and hoped for the best, but also planned for the worst, and there was no way to know what that was until it happened. The stage manager is supposed to anticipate potential problems, but sometimes even thinking ahead was not sufficient. In that case, I had to make the best decision I could based on the information available to me.

I have learned to listen to those around me. While I think about a problem in a particular way, someone else may be able to approach it differently and think about it from another perspective. Sometimes solutions can come from the most unlikely of places, and it becomes a matter of wanting to work towards making those discoveries.

Throughout the course of my graduate studies, I have learned to have more confidence and pride in my work and myself. I have learned to step up and be a strong leader in order to provide better guidance to my team. While I have found it important to connect with my work, I have also had to learn how to approach it with a level head. This has been a difficult balance to find, and while I continue to struggle with it, I have the tools for success.

I am very grateful to have had this opportunity, and hope that in my future work I will be able to continue to build upon the skills that I have learned here.

SELECTED PRODUCTION PAPERWORK

Table 1. SM-ASM Duty Sheet

Category	Stage Manager	Assistant Stage Manager
Pre-Production	Character / Scene Breakdown	Prop List
	Set up SM Book	Set up ASM Book
	Floor taping	Floor taping (plot ground plan)
	Create Wiki Page	Help Maintain Wiki Page
	Actor Packets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cast List • Contact Sheet • Emergency Contact Sheet • Bio Form • Scene Breakdown • Company Calendar • Deputy Election Forms • Break Vote Forms 	Actor Packets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallet Card • Actor Packet Labels • Help Assemble Packets
Production Meeting	Prepare Agenda / Run Meeting	Type / Distribute Meeting Minutes
Rehearsal	Check in with director	Set up SM table in rehearsal room
	Set up SM kit & rehearsal table	Set scene and props for rehearsal Set up any hospitality items (tea, etc.)
	Nightly rehearsal report	Maintain Props tracking / preset
	Daily schedule	Daily schedule
	Coordinate Fitting Schedule	Line Notes
	Maintain Blocking Script	Maintain Entrance / Exit Information
	Coordinate Light / Sound Info	Prepare / Maintain shift plot
	Check Actor Attendance	Assist in Calling Late Actors
	Track Script Changes – Maintain Master Script	Track Script Changes
Tech	Maintain schedule	Check actor attendance at top of call
	Coordinate lights and sound	Supervise run crew / Coordinate scene shifts
	Run end of night meeting	End of night clean up supervision
	Communicate stage needs to ASM and full team	Release crew as appropriate
	Store any head sets or other valuables as needed	Assist in space shut down (lights, doors, etc.)
Performance	Make calls (10, 5)	Make places call and confirm places on headset
	Run Fight Call	Have stage set prior to warm ups or fight call (reset for top of show)
	Collect / Return Valuables	Supervise run crew
	Call Show	Run Backstage
	Lock Booth / Theatre	Supervise end of night shut down
	Communicate any special post / pre-show needs	Release crew

Table 3. Script Blocking Key

X	Cross		Ottoman
X→	Cross To		Settee
→	To		Chaise
NT	Enter	sb	Side Board
XT	Exit		Crate
	Stand Up		Table
	Sit Down		Bench
	Face To		Chair
	Fall Down		Armchair
	Give To		Hat Tree
AUD	Audience		Swing
To	Take Off	tb	Turkish Bath
Po	Put On		Cup
	Pick Up		
	Put Down		
@	Around		
	Turn To		
	Johnny		Lord Summerhays
	Mr. Tarleton		Lina Szczepanowska
	Mrs. Tarleton		Joey Percival
	Hypatia		Gunner
	Bentley		

Table 4. Master Track Sheet

When	Who	What	Notes
Transition into Act 1			
pre	LeeAnn	Check SL Places (Hoffman)	
pre	Morgan	Check SR Places (Burford, Enriquez) (headset)	Give clear to LeeAnn
pre	LeeAnn	Stage blues out for B/O	Give clear to Becky
pre	Morgan	Blue rail lights out	w/ LeeAnn
on Q	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter In	
on Q	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter Out	
in act	LeeAnn	Stage blues on for act	
in act	Morgan	Blue rail lights on for act	w/ LeeAnn
Transition into Intermission			
end Act 1	Deck	Prep Broom and mop	
end Act 1	Full Deck	Prep Foley FX	
end Act 1	Full Deck	Foley FX on Blue Q light	
end Act 1	LeeAnn	Stage blues out for B/O	
end Act 1	LeeAnn	Blue rail lights out for B/O	
on Q	Britt/Heather	Shutter In	
on Q	Britt/Heather	Shutter Out	
	LeeAnn	Stage blues on for act	
Transition into Act 2			
	LeeAnn	Check SR Places (8 total, not Geffrard)	
	LeeAnn	Stage blues out for B/O	
	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter In	
	Derek	Fog machine cue (on headset)	
	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter Out	
	LeeAnn	Stage blues on for act	
	Morgan	Blue rail lights on for act	w/ LeeAnn
top Act 2	Derek	Fog machine OFF	
Transition to End of Show			
	LeeAnn	Stage blues out for B/O	
	Morgan	Blue rail lights out for B/O	w/ LeeAnn
	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter In	
	Kyle/Jimmie	Shutter Out	
	LeeAnn	Stage blues on	
	Morgan	Blue rail lights on	w/ LeeAnn

Used with permission of LeeAnn C. Yeckley

Figure 1. Production Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Aug.	30 Reh 7-11	31 Reh 7-11	1 Sept. Reh 7-11	2 Reh 7-11	3 Pro. Mtg. 11 a.m. Reh 7-11	4 Day Off
5 Reh 7-11	6 Reh 7-11	7 Reh 7-11	8 Reh 7-11	9 Reh 7-11	10 Pro. Mtg. 11 a.m. <i>Due: Light & Sound Plot</i> Reh 7-11	11 Day Off
12 Reh 7-11	13 Reh 7-11	14 Reh 7-11	15 Reh 7-11	16 Reh 7-11	17 Pro. Mtg. 11 a.m. <i>Due: Program Info</i> Reh 7-11	18 Painting in Mabie Day Off
19 Reh 7-11	20 <i>Due: Director press release quotes</i> Reh 7-11	21 Paul out of town Reh 7-11	22 Start Scenic Install Photo Call Time TBA Reh 7-11	23 Reh 7-11	24 Pro. Mtg. 11 a.m. <i>Due: Actor Bios & Headshots</i> Reh 7-11	25 Painting in Mabie Day Off
26 Light Focus Paul returns Reh 7-11	27 Actors on Stage <i>Program Proof #1</i> Reh 7-11	28 Light Focus Reh 7-11	29 <i>Due: Program Corrections</i> Reh 7-11	30 Program Changes Made Reh 7-11	1 Oct. Pro. Mtg. 11 am <i>Program Proof #2</i> Crew Training	2 Tech Reh 8/10
3 Tech Reh 8/10	4 Dress Reh	5 Dress Reh	6 Dress Reh	7 Dress Reh Archival Photos	8 Perf #1 8 pm	9 Perf #2 8 pm
10 Perf #3 2 pm	11	12	13	14 Perf #4 8 pm	15 Perf #5 8 pm	16 Perf #6 8 pm
17 Perf #7 2 pm	18	19	20	21	22	23

Figure 2. Sample Rehearsal Report

University of Iowa Department of Theatre Arts		
Misalliance		
Rehearsal Report		
Director: Eric Forsythe		SM: Rebecca J. Simons
Rehearsal #: 26	Start: 7:00 p.m.	Location: Mabie Theatre
Date: 9-28-2010	Stop: 11:00 p.m.	Next Rehearsal: Wednesday, 9-29 @ 7 p.m.
Late/Absent: None		
Accidents/Injuries: None		
Rehearsal Breakdown		
Time:	What Was Covered:	
6:15	Crew Chief Call	
7:00	Actors to rehearsal costumes; Notes	
7:12	Work through p. 1-14	
8:20	Break	
8:31	Work through p. 14-27	
9:39	Break	
9:50	Run through of Act 1; Notes	
11:00	End of call	
General:		
167. In the run through tonight, Act 1 ran 57 minutes.		
168. All furniture pieces were left on the Mabie stage this evening at the request of Paul Collins, who will be using them during his focus time on the stage tomorrow from 8:00 a.m. to noon.		
Scenic:		
169. Ms. Brookens has an appointment tomorrow (Wednesday 9-29) at 1:45 p.m. on the Mabie stage to adjust the height on the swing. At current moment the swing has stretched lower from its original hanging height and is currently hanging low enough to hit the scenic elements located directly upstage of it.		
170. Would it be possible for the shop staff to re-attach the corkboard sitting in Mabie by the props cabinets to the wall? It needs to be hung on the wall directly above where it is currently sitting on the ground, as stage management would like to use it as a backstage callboard.		
171. Can we please get some black fabric padding placed on the onstage edge of the stage left smoke pocket? It needs to extend vertically from about 3' to 7' above the Mabie stage floor. There are numerous actors who exit quickly through that opening, and there is concern about personal injury on the metal.		
Properties:		
172. Eric Forsythe has asked if it would be possible to get the candy Bentley eats during the show in rehearsal this week. The candy that he would like are called "meringues" and are available at HyVee. Each show are large number of these are consumed, so stage management roughly estimates needing 2 or 3 packages per show.		
173. Eric Forsythe likes the silver tea set as the final show tea set. The tea set (tea pot, creamer and sugar bowl) is in need of polishing to be show ready.		
174. A larger silver tray will be needed to hold the tea set (tea pot, creamer and sugar bowl) and 3 tea cups. The tray should be large enough to hold the tea cups when they are spread out and set on their saucers, as they will be pre-filled with liquid when they come onstage.		

Figure 2 - Continued

<p>175. Would it be possible to either get a different sewing box or repair the one we have been using in rehearsal? Eric Forsythe likes the size and shape of it, but thinks that it looks a little too worn to fit the world of the play.</p> <p>176. Please add a seam ripper to the props list. Hypatia will use it when darning the sock in Act 1 in conjunction with the sock darning.</p>					
<p>Costumes:</p> <p>177. Mr. Reynolds has a fitting scheduled tomorrow (Wednesday 9-29) from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>178. Would it be possible to cut a small hole in one of the brown socks that Hypatia is using to darn onstage, or get a sock that already has a hole in it in order to allow her to actually mend it?</p> <p>179. One of our actors mistakenly took home his silk handkerchief yesterday, accidentally threw it away and then used it wipe off their hands after cleaning up a mess his pet had made. The actor is willing to launder the item, but would need instructions on how best to do that unless costumes would like to propose another solution for the issue.</p> <p>180. Eric Forsythe would like to get a different brooch for the one that Gunner carries, as the current one is too dark to read against the clothing he is wearing. He thought that perhaps an ivory or yellow one might read better onstage.</p>					
<p>Lights:</p> <p>No notes, thank you.</p>					
<p>Sound:</p> <p>181. Can you please confirm the time that you are meeting with Eric Stone on Thursday to discuss the plane sound effects with Stage Management?</p> <p>182. In talking tonight, Eric Forsythe was questioning the possibility of dropping a metal cabinet or other heavy item from a great height backstage in Mabie, and if that might be the way to produce the desired sound effect for the plane crash.</p>					
<p>Projections:</p> <p>183. An updated projections cue list has been placed on the wiki for reference. A separate email listing out the major changes from Jenni Page-White and with a copy of the new cue sheet attached has been forwarded to both Andrew Nelsen and Maylan Thomas.</p>					
<p>Dramaturgy:</p> <p>No notes, thank you.</p>					
<p>Vocal Coaching:</p> <p>No notes, thank you.</p>					
<p>Marketing:</p> <p>No notes, thank you.</p>					
<p>Stage Management:</p> <p>No notes, thank you.</p>					
<p>Facilities:</p> <p>184. Misalliance has borrowed 4 opera chairs from 172 and they are currently on the Mabie stage acting as stand-ins for furniture items to allow Paul to continue with lighting focus. If this is a problem, stage management will be happy to return them and borrow several chairs from elsewhere.</p>					
<p>Daily/Weekly Rehearsal Hours: Day(Week)</p>					
D. Brookens	4:00(8:00)	K. Consamus	0:00(4:00)	D. Hoffman	4:00(8:00)
K. Burford	4:00(8:00)	A. Enriquez	4:00(8:00)	K. Lloyd	4:00(8:00)
M. Calkins	4:45(8:45)	G. Geffrard	0:00(4:00)	P. Reynolds	0:30(4:30)
<p>Distribution List: J. Birder, E. Burchett, P. Collins, B. Croy, J. Fialko, M. Green, E. Forsythe, H. Foster, A. Helland, J. Keisling, C. Kelchen, O. Kwon, J. Leigh-Johnson, R. Loula, D. McGraw, A. Nelsen, T. Nordquist, S. Orhon, J. Page-White, M. Petkewec, J. Schuchert, R. Simons, E. Stone, M. Thomas, R. Tritten, B. Winn, L. Wolf, L. Yeckley</p>					

Figure 3. Sample Performance Report

University of Iowa Department of Theatre Arts		
Misalliance		
Performance Report		
Director: Eric Forsythe		SM: Rebecca J. Simons
Performance #: 3	Weather: 70 degrees & sunny	Location: Mabie Theatre
Date: 10-10-2010	House Count: 90	Next Performance: 10-14 @ 8:00 p.m.
Late/Absent: None		
Accidents/Injuries: None		
House Open: 1:36 p.m.		House Close: 1:59 p.m.
Act 1 Start: 2:00 p.m.	Act 1 End: 2:56 p.m.	Act 1 Time: :55
Length of Intermission: :15		
Act 2 Start: 3:12 p.m.	Act 2 End: 4:40 p.m.	Act 2 Time: 1:28
Length of Show: 2:38		
General: No notes, thank you.		
Scenic: No notes, thank you.		
Properties: 5. The binding on the novel that Johnny reads is falling apart and needs to be glued back together. 6. The angel food cake is getting very crumbly, and stage management wondered if a new should be used for the remaining performances? 7. The sloe gin is running low.		
Costumes: No notes, thank you.		
Lights: No notes, thank you.		
Sound: 8. It sounds like SQ A.5 is not fading out SQ A so much as cutting it out abruptly. Can you please look at this?		
Projections: 9. There was an issue with the computer temporarily freezing during the performance today and a cue not executing when it was called as a result. Madison also reported that when she arrived today she found the computer already on, when she usually is the one to turn it on, and she had turned it off last night. Could this have contributed to this issue? 10. There was a problem with End of Show A not executing properly, in that it is supposed to fade the Act 2 Clouds to a blackout but in the performance today took the screen out in sections (as in visible chunks eventually clearing to a complete blackout). In testing this following the performance it was discovered that the problem is only occurring intermittently, as it will occasionally take out the entire screen in a fade. Becky can be contacted for more details about the issue if necessary.		

Figure 3 - Continued

Dramaturgy: No notes, thank you.
Marketing: No notes, thank you.
Production Stage Management: No notes, thank you.
Facilities: No notes, thank you.
Distribution List: J. Birder, E. Burchett, P. Collins, B. Croy, J. Fialko, M. Green, E. Forsythe, H. Foster, A. Helland, J. Keisling, C. Kelchen, O. Kwon, J. Leigh-Johnson, R. Loula, D. McGraw, A. Nelsen, T. Nordquist, S. Orhon, J. Page-White, M. Petkewec, J. Schuchert, R. Simons, E. Stone, M. Thomas, R. Tritten, B. Winn, L. Wolf, L. Yeckley

Figure 4. Sample Production Meeting Minutes

Misalliance

Production Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 3, 2010

11:03-11:40

In Attendance

P. Collins, J. Fialko, E. Forsythe, A. Helland, J. Page-White, R. Simons, E. Stone, M. Thomas, L. Wolf, L. Yeckley, E. Burchett, C. Kelchen, O. Kwon, R. Loula, D. McGraw, T. Nordquist, M. Petkewec, R. Tritten, B. Winn, J. Birder, M. Green

Distribution

P. Collins, J. Fialko, E. Forsythe, A. Helland, J. Leigh-Johnson, J. Page-White, A. Nelson, R. Simons, E. Stone, M. Thomas, L. Wolf, L. Yeckley, E. Burchett, B. Croy, H. Foster, J. Keisling, C. Kelchen, O. Kwon, R. Loula, D. McGraw, T. Nordquist, M. Petkewec, J. Schuchert, R. Tritten, B. Winn, J. Birder, M. Green

GENERAL

1. Becky reminded the team that the list of script changes and the updated props list can be located on the Wiki page.
2. The Theatre Building will be locked until 5 p.m. this weekend (including Monday) due to the home football game and the holiday weekend. The building will be open after 5 p.m.
3. Rick needs a list of any equipment that any crews needs to borrow from the Opera department.
4. Rick requested that the shops confirm their hires by the end of next week; this includes all existing hires and any new hires. It is all right to hire one extra person, provided that it is understood that the extra person will drop away later in the year.

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

1. The steel has arrived, so work can begin on the ceiling piece.

COSTUMES

1. Amanda will provide the following props from the costume inventory: 2 handkerchiefs, 2 pairs of goggles, 1 brooch, and 1 sock.
2. Amanda asked whether pockets should be designed into Mrs. Tarleton's costume before the shop begins building it. Eric F. and Becky confirmed that Mrs. Tarleton's costume would not need pockets.
3. Gunner's costume will need enough pockets to hold: a pistol, 2 photographs, and a brooch. Eric F. prefers that these items not all come out of the same pocket.
4. Other pocket needs for this show are: Mr. Tarleton (1 handkerchief) and Lina (1 small notebook, 1 pencil, and a calling card case).
5. After discussions with Eric F., Amanda has decided to use period ankle-high boots as opposed to work boots for Gunner's costume.

Figure 4 - Continued

6. Eric F. wants to emphasize the difference in stature between the characters of Johnny & Bentley.
7. David Hoffman has been instructed to allow his hair to grow out for the performances.

SCENIC

1. The construction schedule is running slightly ahead now. The extra time will be used for the Partnership in the Arts build.
2. On Tuesday of next week, the shop will begin laying down the show deck and floor.
3. The ceiling build will begin now that the steel has arrived.
4. Eric S. visited the rock quarry recently and brought back samples for Paul and Eric F. He will be using a local chip limestone for the upstage path. Amanda and Eric S. have already discussed how the gravel will interact with the actor's shoes. Mats will be placed on SL and SR exits of the gravel path. Megan suggested a third mat be added to the step area onstage to keep gravel from entering the main acting space. No specifications were made regarding the look, color, or placement of the onstage mat. This topic should be discussed further.
5. Rick brought up the need to wash the gravel before installing it and wondered whether a truck would need to be rented for this purpose. Ojin has some ideas for washing the gravel without renting a truck.
6. Stage Management will need a rake for the gravel. Craig said he could provide the rake.

PAINT

1. The paints schedule is running as planned. Tina had nothing else to report at this time.

PROPS

1. Craig will provide the rake for Stage Management , to be used on the gravel path.
2. The props meeting on Thursday went well. Craig has the newest revised props list.
3. Several of the furniture pieces are currently being built:
 - The settee should be finished and available for rehearsal either Tuesday or Thursday.
 - The chaise will come later, but a rehearsal chaise is available now in the shop.
4. Craig pulled the side bar and the writing desk. Both can be used in rehearsals.
5. Becky will schedule Mr. Geffrard for a "Turkish bath" fitting. He will need to come with a hat (either soft hat or bowler) for that fitting, because the hat will need to fit through the hole easily. The height of the seat in the Turkish bath is still undetermined; Craig and Eric S. will experiment with height options during the fitting.
6. Craig plans to use the Turkish bath crate as a receptacle for the breakaway punchbowl. During rehearsals the actor will use a bed pillow to simulate the throwing action.

LIGHTING

1. Lights are being hung onstage to prepare for the set install next week.
2. Paul will meet with Eric F. on Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. so that any adjustments can be made to the final lighting plot before it is due, next Friday, September 10th.
3. Focus track is being hung today. Tiana has already volunteered to test it.
4. Eric B. requested a cue light plot from Becky by September 23rd.

Figure 4 - Continued

5. The focus should be done by 8 a.m. on Tuesday. Ojin will check the focus track at 4 p.m. on Friday.
6. Maylan will remove the moving lights on Friday, September 10th at 9 a.m. He anticipates it taking about 30 minutes. Tina has agreed to hold off painting onstage that morning until Maylan has finished.
7. Jesse is not available to design the projections. Maylan, Paul, and Andrew will work together to design and create the projections for the show. They plan to have a brief breakout meeting following the production meeting.

SOUND

1. Lindsay will be able to provide a microphone to amplify the sound of the breaking punchbowl, should it be decided necessary.
2. Lindsay met with Eric F. earlier this week to discuss the sound FX and music needed for the show.
3. Eric F. brought up an effect that he'd discovered in one of the rehearsals. The plane crash should be preceded by the sound of the plane approaching. The Projections team, Eric F., and Lindsay will need to discuss the path of the plane so the sound FX will match the projection of the plane approaching.

PUBLICITY

1. The selection committee is in the final round of interviews for the new marketing director. He anticipates the new staff member will start in mid-October. Until then, Michelle Green (Marketing RA) will continue to serve as the marketing representative.
2. David McGraw provided marketing deadlines:
 - *Friday, Sept 17th*- DUE: Cast list; list of settings; list of construction team and run crew; any dramaturgical notes for the program; artwork/renderings from Eric S. and Amanda (2 from each, to be included in the program as watermarks or smaller pictures off to the side).
 - *Monday, Sept 20th*- DUE: Quotes from Eric F. to be included in the press release.
 - *Wed, Sept 22nd*- Photo Call in the afternoon, time TBD
 - *Friday, Sept 24th*- DUE: Actor bios and photos
 - *Monday, Sept 27th*- First Proof arrives, distributed to editing
 - *Wed, Sept 29th*- DUE: All corrections to the First Proof copy
 - *Thurs, Sept 30th*- Adjustments made to First Proof
 - *Friday, Oct 1st*- Second Proof corrected during the production meeting; Corrected Second Proof goes to printer at noon
3. Photo call will be on Wednesday, September 22nd in the afternoon, time TBD. The content of the photos, costumes to be used, and actors needed are still being decided. The current plan is to use the USL wall as the background. Eric hopes to have more intimate shoots taken.
4. Archival photos will be taken on Thursday, October 7th, the final dress. Casey, the photographer used by Summer Rep this year, will be taking the photos.
5. At this point, there are no plans to promote the production through Dottie Ray's radio show.
6. Eric S. has been in touch with Robin and has sent her info about the scenic design to help with the design of the posters.

Figure 4 - Continued

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

1. Crew lists will be available next week. The crew numbers are currently set at 2 wardrobe & 1 wardrobe head, 3 board ops (lights, sound, and projector), and 3-4 stagehands.

DRAMATURGY

1. Eric S. asked if a deadline could be set for the projection footnotes. Jenni plans to have the initial list (with images) to him by Wednesday, Sept 8th.
2. Jenni will meet with Eric F. on Tuesday at 2 p.m. Paul will join them.

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Figure 6. White Model



Image is the intellectual property of R. Eric Stone

Figure 7. Pre-Show Title Projection



Image is the intellectual property of Casey Reynor

Figure 8. Bentley Summerhays Argues Amicably with Johnny Tarleton



Image is the intellectual property of Casey Reynor

Figure 9. Lina Szczepanowska Explains Her Family Tradition of Risking Life Daily



Image is the intellectual property of Casey Reynor

Figure 10. Mr. Tarleton and Lina Szczepanowska Disarm Julius Sparks



Image is the intellectual property of Casey Reynor

Figure 11. Lord Summerhays and Hypatia Watch as Mr. Percival Argues with Mr. Tarleton



Image is the intellectual property of Casey Reynor